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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 000592

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/02/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [OVIP](#) [MARR](#) [KCRM](#) [PA](#)

SUBJECT: PARAGUAYAN VP TO WASHINGTON FOR SECURITY TALKS

REF: A. ASUNCION 00364

[1](#)B. ASUNCION 00403

Classified By: DCM Kevin M. Johnson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. Please see para 4.

[1](#)2. (C) May 2 Ambassador suggested to VP Castiglioni that he visit Washington soon as the first step in drafting a new Paraguayan security strategy. Following up the broad plan announced by NDF after the Cubas kidnapping (ref A) and complementing increased cooperation with Colombia (ref B), the VP would consult senior U.S. officials, including the Secretary, and the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies

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(CHDS). Castiglioni,s visit would flesh out GOP priorities, building on the general plan already announced - "Paraguay Seguro." This would be followed soon thereafter by a CHDS visit to Paraguay to conduct an in-depth seminar with senior GOP officials to draft a national security strategy.

[1](#)3. (C) Castiglioni seized on the Ambassador,s suggestion, saying it tracked exactly with his desire to see increased US-Paraguay cooperation in many areas, including security. Now is the time for Paraguay to act, while threats remain relatively manageable. He said his visit should concentrate on security issues and also symbolize broader USG-GOP collaboration, something not all Paraguayans appreciated. He added that he would love to see VP Cheney to discuss a range of issues. The Ambassador noted how few foreign visitors the VP sees, suggesting that Secretary Rice would also be a key interlocutor. Castiglioni readily agreed, adding that he would like to see NSC WHA Director, and DOD and FBI officials. The Ambassador added that a stop at SOUTHCOM would also be useful. Castiglioni suggested the first week in June for a visit, with the CHDS seminar in Paraguay to follow a few weeks later.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment and Action Request: Unlike many Colorados, VP Castiglioni is reflexively pro-U.S. and seeks to expand commercial and political ties with us, even at the expense of upsetting nationalists, populists, and Brazil. His lead in pushing an Open Skies agreement (septel) and his close cooperation with Colombia on security show his skill and determination in areas of responsibility granted him by NDF. Helping him craft a national security strategy offers the opportunity to advance major USG priorities and to strengthen those within the GOP friendly to the U.S. Please advise if the early June dates are acceptable and the likely availability of the Secretary.

KEANE